



Pandemic Working Group (PWG)

Location: Zoom
Date: Thursday, April 29, 2021
Time: 12:00pm to 1:00pm

Agenda & Notes

Agenda Item	Notes
Emergency Child Care (ECC)	<p>Continuing to operate. Providing care for over 450 children, with about 200 children on the waiting list as there has been more of a demand than anticipated. The largest challenge in meeting the waiting list is having enough staffing, but working to create different solutions to meet demand.</p> <p>Over 2000 families completed the Early Learning and Child Care survey. A high-level overview of the data will be released in June. In-depth disaggregated data will be more readily available closer to the fall.</p>
Child Welfare	<p>Still no request for foster care for children with parents who are ill.</p> <p>Provincial COVID Task Force – Have had many discussions around the importance of looking after staff who are feeling depleted, and how this affects caring for children and youth.</p> <p>Member-shared links re: workforce well-being:</p> <p>There's a Name for the Blah You're Feeling: It's Called Languishing.</p> <p>WorkWell Talk</p> <p>Action: Will have this as a discussion item at a future PWG meeting.</p>
Education	<p>WRDSB: Remote learning will last until at least the end of the provincial lockdown, but have not had direction beyond that. Provincial direction has been to limit number of in-person learning, but schools continue to support complex learning students as needed. Currently in process of asking families/caregivers to complete a survey by May 3rd to determine if they'd like a remote learning option come September. Families/caregivers who would prefer in-person learning do not need to complete the survey. If online learning continues through to June, expect engagement to drop, especially</p>



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	<p>for elementary school students. WRDSB will also be experiencing senior staff transitions due to various retirements.</p> <p>Mon Avenir: Largely continuing with virtual learning, with only a handful in-person. Have experienced a high demand for summer courses. Have two Newcomer workshops planned for early May.</p> <p>WCDSB: Will be surveying parents/guardians in June re: choosing online or in-person learning come September. The answer given is for the entire school year and cannot be changed. Summer planning from an education and mental health perspective is underway.</p> <p>It was noted that across all school boards, a future challenge for next year with split online and in-person learning is executing Public Health programs (e.g., in-school dental checks).</p> <p>Question raised re: if there has been changes to academic standards to ease mental and emotional pressure. Answer given that in elementary grades, teachers are encouraged to be kind and understanding. However, there could be long-term challenges to giving grades based solely on participation or effort. One option is for teachers to use “Insufficient Data” in lieu of a low or failing grade.</p> <p>Question raised re: what relationships with community partners will look like in September with online learning. Answer given that things are currently up in the air, but the goal is to eventually have all supports and students back in person.</p> <p>Question raised if it’s possible for a community message to be sent with report cards to note shared messaging of encouragement and support. Answer given yes, and that an electronic message would be much easier to send out.</p> <p>Action: Alison to reach out to School Boards with shared messaging that can be sent out to students.</p>
Vaccination Roll Out	<p>Vaccination roll out continuing to proceed in the community and to expand. Have moved to the second group of essential workers and people aged 45+ in high-risk neighbourhoods. Continue to use all five modalities in the roll out. Roll out is dependent on vaccine availability, which is constantly changing. Vaccine for 12 to 15-year-olds (via Pfizer) continuing to be evaluated.</p> <p>Question raised if the vaccine for 12 to 15-year-olds would only be provided at community vaccination sites (and not pharmacies). Answer given that</p>



Children and Youth Planning Table

of Waterloo Region

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	circumstances may change in the future, but if Pfizer is the only available vaccine at the time, due to its storage requirements, that it would be given out at community vaccination sites only.
Summer Programming	YMCA – Have done a lot of work internally on increasing locations to provide non-licensed programming. Family Compass – work underway to update for summer. Action: Please email Monika with Family Compass updates on Summer programming or summer job opportunities for young people.
Safe Isolation Hotel	Click here for a Safe Isolation Site fact sheet, which includes the link to the application form. Referrals are responded to 9am to 5pm, 7 days/week. Maximum capacity currently 54 rooms. Currently have 20 people staying in a Safe Isolation site, with one being under 18. The vast majority of individuals benefiting from SIS are adults, with only a few being children and youth.
Shared Messaging	Meeting between Communications Action Team and PWG reps to scope shared messaging taking place tomorrow, and an update will be provided at the next meeting.
Member Updates/ Other	Alison introduced Shama Saleh, the newest PWG member. Shama is a Community Engagement Coordinator with Crime Prevention Council. Youth Impact Survey launches Friday (April 30 th). Click here for ready to use promotion materials. Aiming for 1,000 diverse participants age 9-18. When sharing information about the survey with youth, it was noted that the top three reasons youth have named as their motivation to complete the survey are: the prizes, volunteer hours, and (the number one reason) the opportunity to make a difference. Report: 10 Threats to Childhood in Canada and the Impact of COVID-19
Next Steps	Next meeting: May 13 th , 12pm to 1pm